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Papers prepared for this 1968 training conference for members of the Illinois Migrant Council dealt with the migrant dilemma of poverty and powerlessness, the role of paraprofessionals in migrant education; guidelines for counseling and psychological testing; techniques for teaching English pronunciation, vocabulary, and structure (English as a second language); and psychological principles of curriculum development for adult basic education. (A conference questionnaire and tabulated responses are included.) (ly)

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PRESENTATIONS

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for

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ILLINOIS MIGRANT COUNCIL

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Foreword

The purpose of the Educational Training Conference conducted 7 and 8 December 1968 for the Illinois Migrant Council was threefold:

1. It gave teachers and directors of the various centers the opportunity to discuss those areas pertinent to their educational design.

2. It gave Area Coordinators, Area Representatives, and Student Council Presidents of the various centers the opportunity to identify with one another and thereby realize the importance of their function within the centers.

3. Above all, it set the tone for new ideas and concepts which possibly could be incorporated into the curricula of the various centers.

The presentations made at the conference are included in the following pages. The prepared text, "Testing and Counseling," by Dr. Aurelius A. Abbatiello, though not presented at the conference (because of his illness), has been included here because of its interest and educational value.

At the conclusion of the training conference, a survey questionnaire was circulated to the participants for two reasons: first, to assess the value of the conference, and, second, to aid

in establishing new concepts and inputs which might be incorporated into the overall philosophy of the Illinois Migrant Council. A copy of the questionnaire, together with its findings, is also included.

Raymond D. Robinson
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MSFW Technical Assistance
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PRESENTATIONS

THE MIGRANT DILEMMA

by

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Probably one of the most straightforward reports treating the problems of the poor was prepared by the President's Commission on Rural Poverty under the chairmanship of Gov. Edward T. Breathett of Kentucky. The Commission very cleverly entitled the report, "The People Left Behind," and while I have no doubts that every person in this room has read the report, I have grave doubts if many of us raise questions as to who left these people behind. I question further if many of us here recognize that those who are left behind were not travelling alone towards their own unique objectives; they, too, are striving to accomplish the same American dream of economic and social independence. If I am leaving Chicago for New York, and you are leaving for Los Angeles, we are going in opposite directions, so it's not likely that either of us can be left behind. But if both of us had left for New York, then it is quite possible that I could have been left behind. It is further possible that you would not be too concerned about me or when I get to New York, as long as you get there.

History and some of the recent events that are now history, and which I pray would not be repeated, have indicated that you should have been concerned about me when you recognized early in the game that I was being left behind. History has also indicated that the anticipated happy rendezvous you hoped for could not become a permanent reality because I have been left too far behind. The automatic support which you should have been getting from me if I were there is absent, and you fear my arrival now because you are responsible in part for leaving me behind.

Migrant farmers constitute a large block of Americans who have been socially and economically left behind. These people, in fact, were born poor and have very little hope of anything else beyond dying poorer. Their families, particularly their sons and daughters, are destined to share the same fate unless those of us who share the responsibility for leaving them behind are willing to go back and help. There are many of us who are administrators, teachers, social welfare workers, etc., who are too hidebound to go back; we have found it difficult to empathize. And there are still others who just don't have the capacity and/or imaginations as teachers and administrators to go back and help those who are left behind.

The migrant dilemma is multi-faceted, and I have no intentions of attempting to treat each facet of this social dilemma. However, I certainly would want to discuss with you in real terms what are some of the characteristics and

responsibilities of a teacher who teaches migrants. Much of what I have to say will probably conflict with what you have heard and what you believe, but there are a couple of things that you will have to know. First, I was born in poverty, brought up in need, and I am living in want. Let there be no doubt in your mind that I too was left behind, but I have reached a stage now where I am sharing minutely in the national wealth and in the national debt. I owe a lot to the professors in the college and university that I attended who came back to help me when I was far behind. I owe a lot to the capitalistic system with its many loopholes (what other people call opportunities) which gave me an opportunity to get heavily involved in debt, and I owe most to a system of government which is committed to the limitless perfectability of all men. Migrant farmers must be taught about the system, they must be told the realities of life. It is the fundamental responsibility of every migrant teacher to teach first the concepts of the capitalistic system as we know it in America and, second, how to manipulate that system in meeting their own ends. Reading, writing and arithmetic are extremely important, but these skills become totally useless if they are not geared towards helping the individual to become economically self-sufficient. Social self-sufficiency is contingent, and I mean entirely contingent, upon economic self-sufficiency. Teachers who fail to help migrant farmers become economically self-sufficient are acting like vultures feeding on the poor.

I wish you would pardon me at this point for this reference to myself, but I have been a Negro all my life, one of Jamaican heritage, and it aggravates my equilibrium when I hear the professionals refer to the teaching of Negro concepts, Negro awareness, and the black power movement as well. Yet none of these people have spelled out to me or to interested Americans how all this abstract teaching to a people who have been left behind is ever going to turn into dollar bills. How basic teaching in a capitalistic society can divorce itself from the method of acquiring and investing money is beyond my wildest stretch of imagination. In my judgment, if Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans or any ethnic group, for that matter, are going to be absorbed into society, they must be taught to manipulate the system in which they live. Manipulation as used here in this context goes far beyond just merely understanding it. I would wager that at least 90 percent of American blacks understand the system, but much less than 10 percent can manipulate it. The rhetoric in teaching methods and techniques of how to manipulate the system is very different from the rhetoric used in teaching them to understand the system. For example, people should be taught consumer economics only in such terms as it permits them to save and invest dollars. How much time does it take a man whose annual income is $3,000 per year to save $1,000? It may take some all their lives; it may take others a much shorter time. The teacher should be sufficiently versatile to tell her participants of the different alternatives in acquiring wealth honestly.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, speaking to an assembly of teachers, that "Only she or he who has can give." There is substantial truth in so small a phrase. Teachers of today have little to give in the first place, and teachers of migrant farmers who are moonlighting have less to give to their students.

We can no longer say that the Federal Government does not recognize the migrant problem because they are pumping millions of dollars into migrant training programs. What we can say is that in many instances teachers, administrators, and others who are supposed to be working on the migrant projects have no commitment and care less what happens to the migrant farmers as long as the teachers and administrators get their pay checks.

THE ROLE OF

THE PARA-PROFESSIONAL

by

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I am very pleased to be here this morning, because it offers me a challenge to make my contribution to an educational cause that I believe must be met if our way of life is to be preserved and improved.

All human behavior has a cause, and already the question may have arisen in your mind--why should I be here this morning? I think that probably the most important reason for my being here is that I have been tremendously intrigued with some ideas. The first idea is that everyone can change his behavior through the route of learning. The second, that learning is really the thing that makes the difference in any society. Let's consider the state of our society today. We in the United States are in a considerable mess. We have a war, violence is common, ignorance is very prevalent, and the incidence of mental illness is rising, all because we have learned to behave in ways that make this kind of behavior inevitable. These problems, however, are not inevitable if we will learn new ways of behavior. Why don't we learn differently? The reasons are many and complex,

but there are some hang-ups that are rather easily discernible. Some of the hang-ups are:

1. We are fixated on what man is, rather than what he can become.

2. Our solution to hostility in man is an emotional one; we simply return hostility when hostility is expressed--put a man in jail and in terms of the seriousness of the crime, we set the length of his stay.

3. We see disadvantagement as incurable; we have always had it, some men always take advantage of other men, so we must expect poverty and exploitation.

4. A man who is a failure is seen as a failure and becomes a societal drop-out. So we concentrate our study on failure rather than concentrating on success. We see unlearned and ignorant people, and we say they are ignorant because they don't want to learn or can't, and we have test results to prove it.

I am a psychologist more than a professional educator although I have taught all of my professional life, but I hasten to add that my greatest successes in changing behavior through learning have not occurred in the classroom, so practically speaking, I am probably a para-professional. For as I see it, a para-professional becomes an aid to learning rather than a person who "larns" the student. The challenge of changing the behavior

of the migrant and seasonal worker is to see if he can so learn the game which adapts him to playing it successfully when he has such a need.

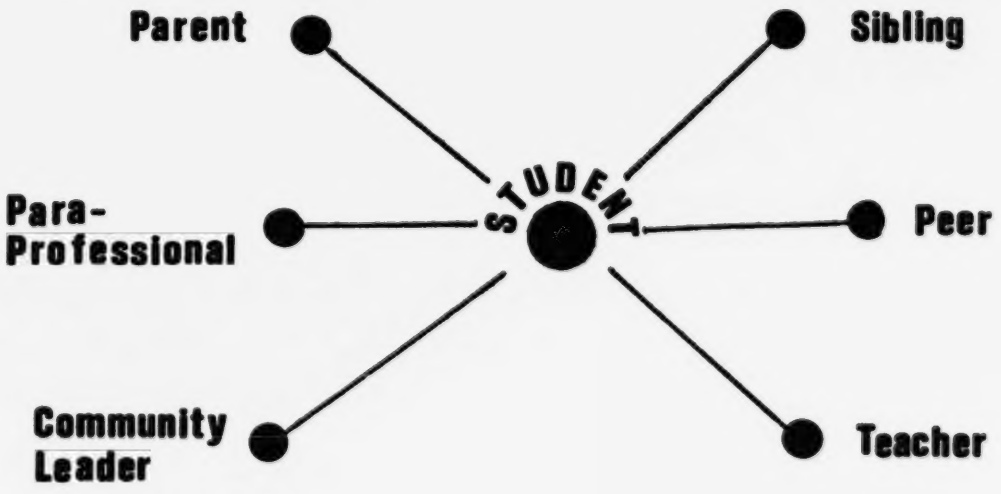
Now let us consider for a moment people in terms of the dimensions of human natures rather than their limitations. Let us also consider an individual from the first. When a human being is born or at any other moment in time, he is a remarkable organism in terms of what he can become--not what he is--but what he can become. Again, what he is is the hang-up. Most of you have spent most of your learning time in school learning to read and then practicing this competence. Yet any one of you could double your reading rate and comprehend the increased reading material as well as the less read material, but you don't do it because you settle for what is your custom and protect your performance by rationalizing that you can't do any better.

We know now that the 3-year-old can learn to read, maybe better than the 4-year-old, and certainly better than the 6½-year-old. Yet we make most of the youngsters wait for three and a half years because this added advantage will make kindergarten and first grade learning a boring experience and may develop some harmful side effects (never yet proven).

Why don't we do this differently? A significant part of this answer depends upon the need for motivation and effort that comes from individual attention and concern. One must believe he can change, that he can learn. This belief comes from

personal contact, the contribution of another person, the great contributions of the para-professional. Now the learner must make the effort and set the goal. Learning is always an individual matter. No one can breathe, eat, drink, sleep, learn, think, create, or aspire for us. We must do this ourselves. Yet we depend upon others to free our intelligence by providing the model, commending our efforts, believing in our potential, and most of all, caring about us. In other words, speaking, selecting, and developing a competence depends upon the relationships cultivated by somebody else. The success of this relationship depends more upon those characteristics that are not generally labelled as professional because professional learning activities are seldom concerned with the acquisition of these characteristics. As a matter of fact, in a profession like medicine, these competencies are dismissed as qualities of a bedside manner.

As important as is this skill of providing a model, praise, beliefs, communication, empathy, and concern, they are namely provided by one individual. The truth of the matter is that they are supplied and that they occur through multiple contacts. As illustrated, most individuals become what they are as shown by the diagrammatic example.



It is important to point out that not all these contacts are productive of freeing the intelligence or producing happiness. They may all or one do just the opposite. All affect the student in some very significant way that has nothing to do with his professional effort. Also, the impact of these individuals should become progressively important in terms of their consistency of purpose. It is further important how intense the relationship becomes between the person who cares and the student.

The role of the para-professional is to make his contact as significant as he can, and if possible key it in with others who have mutual purposes in the becoming of an individual. He must above all contribute that which makes the most difference and not compete with someone else. He must not be concerned with the size, but the quality of his contribution. The old Marx Brothers movie in which Groucho played the shyster lawyer emphasizes the point. When a client commented on the dozens of flies buzzing around his broken-down office, Groucho said, "We have a working agreement. The flies don't practice law, and I don't climb the walls!"

All of the para-professionals, most of who are middle-class Anglos, will have to cultivate certain competencies. First, they will have to believe that their migrant students can learn as well and in some cases better than they or their associates do. This can only be done if they become at first hand aware of the potentiality their students have which is inherent in most humans.

Second, they will have to communicate this belief in such a way that the students believe it. I can well remember when my son came home from the sixth grade one noon. He was very excited when he burst into the house to tell his mother he could be a good student in arithmetic. He told how the new substitute teacher had shown him his arithmetic paper upon which he had worked correctly six problems out of ten. She had said, "See John, you got six correct. You really know how to do these problems, and you can learn to do the other four." John said no teacher had ever pointed that out to him before. They always talked about the problems he had missed. How could anyone reject that explanation?

Third, you have to be available when you are needed. This availability will not be used unless you as a para-professional offer some aid that is needed at an appropriate time. This success is a feature of being lucky to be at the right place at the right time or consistantly being on hand frequently enough to make the psychology fit.

Fourth, the above mentioned aid must be based on relevance that demands a study of the potentiality of the student and the extent of his achievement. Much that is taught by our professionals in our classrooms is so irrelevant that it is a wonder that a verb is ever conjugated or a sentence ever diagrammed.

Fifth, and maybe most important, is to convince the student that as a human being you care about him and how much you care, which can only be demonstrated by action. The greatest problem

in our affluent society is that we do not care, and if we do, not enough. The one mile is many times not enough, and neither is the seventh. In one hard-core training unit, a black leader broke the rules of training 40 times, but he has now become an outstanding leader in the experiment.

Roughly, these are some of the qualities that the role of the para-professional demands.

TESTING AND COUNSELING

by

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The Need for Counseling

There arise many occasions when the teacher is called upon to assume the role of counselor. Quite often, migrant students will take their problems, personal and otherwise, to someone whom they feel has their best interests at heart. These may be problems which the migrant worker has been unable to grapple with successfully himself, or they may be problems on which the migrant simply wants advice or reassurance. These situations will only arise when the teacher has taken the trouble to develop a warm and friendly relationship with his students and is respected by them. When such a condition exists, it is natural for someone troubled and perplexed to turn to a considerate ear.

Sometimes a teacher finds that counseling supplemented by the use of psychological tests is in order when the migrant's performance in class is not satisfactory. After determining that the student has the ability to perform, counseling may then be brought into play as a means of finding the cause or causes for poor performance and of taking such steps as may be necessary to correct the situation.

The appropriate handling of such situations in counseling may prove difficult, and requires sensitivity and skill. It is not to be assumed that the average teacher has the skill of the professional. Nurturing such a skill is a painful and exacting task which requires the development of special techniques.

Still another situation in which the teacher may act as counselor arises in dealing with the migrant who is making a poor adjustment to rehabilitation. He may have trouble with other migrants, or he may have an attitude of resentment toward his plight. Any of these reactions may act as deterrents to his progress and general behavior. Many times it is obvious that the migrant has the potential for being a valuable member of the ex-migrant community.

Some principles which you can do well to consider in the counseling situation are as follows:

1. A permissive atmosphere allows the troubled individual to feel free to express himself fully. An attitude of warmth, friendliness and understanding is critical.

2. It is necessary to determine the "real" cause of the difficulty before effective steps can be taken to solve the problem.

3. Information of a personal nature is privileged and must be held in strictest confidence.

4. The counselee is to work out his own solution, not yours. Every attempt should be made to refrain from judging or moralizing.

5. An open door for further consultation fosters communication.

The effectiveness of these principles as guides should prove invaluable to the teacher. Quite often he finds himself pressed into a role for which he is not prepared nor carefully equipped.

Counseling for Vocational Purposes

Counseling for vocational guidance requires careful preparation. It may serve more than one purpose, and so should not be conducted in a haphazard manner. Very often one counseling session is not sufficient; it will only be a preliminary step in the process. If the migrant is interested in getting a job, he will require some time to mull over the information provided on this first occasion.

Counseling is not to be considered an interview, a situation for referring a person to a job. The counseling session should serve as a means of exchanging information regarding the migrant's level of aspiration, his interests, his capabilities, his personal adjustment and fitness for work as well as his past experiences. From the migrant's point of view, you should be able to provide information about current job openings, appropriate placement possibilities, and job requirements. The counselor must constantly

keep in mind that his responsibility is to impart as well as gain information.

The principles mentioned previously can be put to excellent use here. In fact, putting the migrant at ease, being alert for facts, using language appropriate to the occasion, establishing an atmosphere of mutual confidence and respect, and the removal, as far as possible, of psychological barriers, will aid materially in making counseling a satisfying experience. As a counselor, you should endeavor to be as objective as possible and maintain an open mind. You should particularly avoid approaching the counseling session with predetermined ideas. An open mind will enable you to make a more accurate appraisal of the migrant's strengths and weaknesses and his potential value as a worker. You should be a good listener. By your attitude and manner you should indicate that your are giving the counselee your undivided attention. The atmosphere should be one of friendliness and warmth.

Psychological Testing

Over the last four decades, not only large industrial organizations, but also smaller industrial operations and businesses have seen fit to use psychological tests. The purpose is to aid the personnel man in selecting the most capable workers for specific jobs. Studies carried on by the Bureau of National Affairs in Washington, D. C., show that better than 75% of companies of national scope and more than 60% of the smaller ones use psychological tests in selection.

Many jobs require traits which can best be appraised by objective measurement. For example, psychological tests are available for measuring clerical ability, mechanical aptitude, manual dexterity, as well as intelligence. While there is a strong language factor built into many of these instruments, recent attempts have been made to make tests culture-fair for the language handicapped. Special tests peculiarly suited to such needs have been developed by leading tests publishers as well as the U.S. Civil Service Commission.

When psychological testing has been used properly, it has proved of immeasurable value in guidance, selection and placement, and even in the determination of training needs. Most obviously, testing aids in culling out those individuals who are not suited to perform certain jobs. Beyond this, testing may bring to light the strength of less obvious characteristics, set the limits of certain capacities and abilities, and provide an inventory of a counselee's personality makeup. Vocational testing may even act as a pre-selection process eliminating those who may not be skilled or accomplished in a given task.

One word of caution. At best, psychological testing is not a replacement for individual judgment. It provides no final answers. Testing is intended as an aid to the counselor in guidance. It offers some insight by way of identifying the strength of those characteristics required for success on a given job. Psychological test results are no more accurate, no more significant than those who use them with discretion.

TEACHING ENGLISH

AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

by

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This paper hopes to present some of the more important ESOL (English as a second language) techniques which are to be considered in teaching English to migrants. In attempting to make the presentation as meaningful as possible, linguistic reasoning and theory will be eliminated from the presentation in favor of concrete methodology which can be immediately implemented by those present here today.

The topic can be divided into several sections: the presentation of pronunciation, vocabulary and structure. These items should be considered as the main goals of the ESOL classroom. Specific methodologies should be used for the presentation of each class of problem.

First, the sound system of English is more complex than that of many other languages. There are, for example, 33+ phonemes (sounds) in English vs. 24+ phonemes in Spanish; English vowels tend to be longer and less tense than Spanish vowels, etc. These problems require careful attention in the presentation of any new material. Imitation is typically insufficient with the older ABE

student whose native language habits may interfere with the perception and production of the unfamiliar English sounds. Since the habits involved in the native language (Spanish) make the English sound system the most difficult of the language skills to acquire, there are three sequential steps that students must pursue in order to achieve mastery:

1. Hear the sound
2. Discriminate the sound from others
3. Produce the sound

There are certain pronunciation problems in English which can be predicted for the typical Spanish-speaking ABE student based on the occurence or non-occurence of certain sounds and the association of new sounds with different written symbols. After identifying the problem sounds in English, the ABE teacher should use a variety of techniques to teach them:

1. A description of the speech organs--tongue, teeth, and lips--as they produce the sounds.

2. A diagram of the speech organs.

3. A comparison (or contrast) with the most similar sounds in the native tongue.

4. A comparison and contrast of similar English sounds.

Before the above outlined scheme can be implemented, let us establish some guidelines for teaching pronunciation:

- The teacher is the model for pronunciation.
- The learner must hear a sound before he can reproduce it: test discrimination through "minimal pairs."
- Pronunciation problems must be drilled one at a time.
- While meaning is not important, high frequency words can be defined.
- The teacher should point out the association between the sound and the written letter.
- The teacher should point out differences in production of sounds (i.e., English vs. Spanish).
- The teacher should present pronunciation problems whenever a grammatical problem is involved, e.g., /t/ as past tense signal in walked /wakt/, packed /paekt/, etc.

Any diagram should be clear and concise. Using a chalk diagram of the mouth on the blackboard, the teacher can illustrate the tongue position with a hand. As sounds are taught, contrasting sounds should be taught for reinforcement. Using the "minimal pair" technique, one can easily point out the difference in meaning produced by a simple sound change.

bit - pit /b/ /p/ contrast

bat - pat

ban - pan

bass - pass
lab - lap
sub - sup, etc.

tag - tack — /g/ /k/ contrast
pig - pick
sag - sack
lag - lack
lug - luck
gall - call
grime - crime, etc.

This technique is extremely useful both in teaching recognition and production of English sounds. A variation uses these words, three in a row (produced by the teacher) in which the students are asked to indicate which word is different from the others.

bat - vat - bat
van - ban - ban
bile - vile - vile
veer - veer - beer, etc.

A second aspect of ESOL is the technique of teaching vocabulary in context. This technique is not only very meaningful to the students, it is also very logical as a methodological tool. Essentially, it assures that every item of vocabulary is taught in a complete utterance (i.e., a whole sentence) so that the student learns to use it in context. The benefit of this is

that the student acquires an associative meaning from the context as well as learning the pattern into which he may plug many other items of vocabulary. Thus, the sentence,

I have a / truck

can be changed in a thousand ways by almost any noun in the English language to become,

I have a / ball

I have a / gun

I have a / house

I have a / daughter, etc.

In addition, the content of the lesson is important in terms of its relevancy to the student population. Considering the adult migrant, it is difficult to imagine why he would be interested in learning dialogues which have a middle-class orientation. Materials should be constructed which deal with the world of reality in which the migrant exists, with an emphasis upon content directly related to the migrant's needs (i.e., buying, selling, taxes, family, etc.).

Teaching structure is the last feature of language that the ESOL-ABE teacher must master. Since one aspect of language is speaking, the teacher must begin the process of leading students to talk, at first with familiar items, later with more abstract items. Thus, the language learning process becomes one of internalizing sounds, vocabulary and structures by rote and analogy until spontaneous utterances can be produced. For presenting and teaching structures, the use of various drills (i.e., substitution, mim-mem, etc.) should be used.

A. Mim - mem (mimicry - memorization)

a. Teacher: I'm going to work.

Student: I'm going to work.

Teacher: I'm going to work.

Student: I'm going to work.

b. Teacher: I'm going to school.

Student: I'm going to school.

etc.

B. Substitution

a. Teacher: Work.

Student: I'm going to work.

b. Teacher: School.

Student: I'm going to school.

c. Teacher: Play.

Student: I'm going to play.

etc.

This type of drill can be used very effectively to teach placement of nouns as demonstrated in teaching vocabulary in context or change of tense.

Thus, the ABE teacher teaches English in the way it is learned by children and not as it is presented in grammar books.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

AND THE ABE STUDENT

by

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Director of Instruction
Peotone, Illinois

As science and automation continue to push upward, and as the minimum education requirements in all phases of the labor market also rise, society finds itself with a proportionately larger group of adults who must be classified as undereducated or uneducated. These adults, who at one time could have functioned adequately--even successfully--as semi-skilled or unskilled labor, have now been forced into a mere subsistence level, both economically and socially. In terms of the prevailing middle-class cultures of the socio-economic areas in which the undereducated live, they are disadvantaged. Therefore, what can be done to help the disadvantaged adult overcome his economic and social handicaps becomes an imperative need of our society. We must involve this disadvantaged adult in an educational program designed to meet his needs--the Adult Basic Education program.

Before theories of learning applicable to teaching the ABE student can be fruitfully scrutinized, we must answer two questions:

1. What is Adult Basic Education?
2. Who is the ABE student?

First, I wish to describe what I believe Adult Basic Education to be. Adult Basic Education is an instructional program designed specifically for adults who, because of their lack of basic skills, are functioning at a level that does not permit their total involvement into today's complex society. It is a program that provides the student with the prime tools of basic education: reading skills, spelling skills, writing skills, and mathematical skills. As a student gains mastery of these skills, he is hopefully able to expand his understanding of specific content knowledges in the area of language, social studies, science, health and consumer education.

A successful Adult Basic Education program is one that builds upon the student's existing oral-aural skills and further develops oral-aural communication within the areas of the basic skills and the content knowledges. It takes the student where he is and guides and encourages him as he works to achieve his goals. And to me, the words "his goals"--the student's goals--are key words in planning and carrying out an effective Adult Basic Education program. Certainly it is true that the alternative objectives of an ABE program are to enable the student to achieve proficiency in the basic skills in order that he may function in and contribute to the society in which he lives. However, it is equally true that these objectives can be realized only if the student's goals are the primary consideration of the program.

Second, I wish to broadly describe the ABE student. Before relating the adult learner's goals and learning theories related

thereto, it is necessary to identify the person who will enroll in an Adult Basic Education program. The disadvantaged adult student is likely to come from the low socio-economic segment of the population. He may be a member of an ethnic minority group. He may be a native speaker of English; he may have learned to speak English as a second language; or he may not yet speak English at all.

Whatever his background, the goals of the adult student are directly related to his motivations for enrolling in an ABE program. These motivational factors fall into three general categories: economic, educational, and social-agency directed.

Students who are economically motivated generally fall into two groups:

1. Those who are looking for jobs.
2. Those who want to advance in the jobs they hold.

These students are generally eager to learn.

Adults whose motivation is educational are generally interested in self-improvement. They may wish to improve their personal self-image or their image as parents. Many adults are embarrassed because they cannot help their children with schoolwork. Still others feel that they cannot insist that their children stay in school when they, as parents, seem to be "getting along" without the basic skills. These students are usually willing learners.

A third group of ABE students is made up of those who are in class because of a social agency requirement. They enroll in an ABE program to qualify for funds administered by a social agency.

These students may be reluctant learners. They can, however, be reached and helped to take pride in themselves. If their sense of dignity is restored, they can become eager students.

Whatever the forces are that motivate an ABE student to enroll, they must be recognized and accepted by the teacher as a starting point for developing learning experiences and individualized instruction. It is up to the teacher to constantly apply learning theories and techniques to help the student find stronger motivations that will make him want to continue in the program. The greatest strength of a successful adult education program is a good teacher who applies learning theory which inspires rather than deters.

With the preceding overview of Adult Basic Education programs and types of students involved, it is the purpose here to state some major current learning theories and to state them along with some typical experiments on which each is based and to indicate their possible use in teaching adults. Teachers of basic education for adults should consider any generalizations gleaned from this paper as propositions to be tested in actual teaching situations and should not view any of the following as exact rules for learning under any conditions.

After close observation of several re-training projects in which more than 1/3 of the adults were 45 years of age or over, Dr. William F. Brazziel, director of general education at Virginia State College, found:

1. The older worker does well in re-training programs.

2. Deterioration of learning skills is a very gradual process.

3. Adults compensate for this deterioration by clarity of perspective, motivation, and singleness of purpose.

At Duke University, Dr. Carl Eisdorfer conducted some pertinent studies of learning patterns of adults past middle age. His experiments, which dealt mainly with the verbal learning of male adults, were prompted by an earlier study of adult reaction to sensory stimuli--light and sound. From earlier studies of sensory stimuli, it was logically hypothesized that the effects of stimulation would fade more rapidly in the older adult. To test the validity of this hypothesis in verbal learning, Eisdorfer compared young males 20 to 49 years old with a group of men aged 60 to 80 years. Adults were eliminated who were either very high or low in ability according to standardized tests. The materials to be mastered were lists composed of five-letter disyllabic words, each of the words having high association value to other things and being highly familiar as rated by word count. The words were randomly assigned to form a "different list for each individual" and were presented to him by means of a slide projector. The words were in type large enough to be easily read, and the timing was controlled electronically.

Adults were shown words one at a time and were encouraged to respond, guessing if necessary, by predicting the next word to appear. After exposure of all words was complete, there was a 40

second rest period; then, after a warning signal, the first word appeared. The object was for the men to learn the order in which the list of words was arranged. The men were given 15 trials at most to complete this objective. In the first study, the words were flashed on a screen four seconds for one group of men, six seconds for another, and ten seconds for a third group. The same conditions were used for both young and old adults.

An analysis of results showed that the older men profited much more from the longer exposure than did the young adults. There was a significant reduction in errors on the part of the older adult male as the exposure time was advanced from four to eight seconds. This was not true with the younger men. They showed no improvement after an exposure time of eight seconds. The results indicate that in the older adult male the improvement with increased time is related to an increased response rate on the part of the subjects as the pace of learning slows down.

A very significant finding was the relation of learning and performance. It was found that with older people, it might be that they are not too much limited in the actual learning, but are instead limited in their being able to perform at an exact time. Under moderately rapid pacing, there tends to be a withholding of response on the part of the older adult, but we cannot assume that the adult is unable to respond.

In other experiments on the effects in an adult to be emotionally aroused as a result of learning, it was found that the free fatty acid compound of the blood plasma was related to emotional

arousal. Through withdrawal of blood at various intervals, it was found that the older adult did not reach his peak of stress until later after the learning situation terminated than did the younger adult. The results indicate the opposite of what is generally thought, that the older adults are not motivated by a learning situation. Actually older men react at higher stress levels and maintain them for longer periods of time. This accounts for the tendency of the older adult to withhold his response in relation to the high level of stress.

On the basis of these experiments, Dr. Eisdorfer and other researchers at Duke University offered practical approaches to Adult Basic Education programs. Older adults perform better at untimed and unspaced projects. Tasks that require greater understanding should include more opportunity to respond following the introduction of each of the elements involved. Rapidly timed tasks should require only simple stereotyped responses. One important implication of the research at Duke University is the use of programmed material for the older adult, 45 years of age or older. This suggests a learning laboratory that provides opportunities for individual instruction rather than group instruction where emotional stress may be so great as to interfere with the learning processes.

To integrate the number of different major groups of learning theory into a small number of categories, I am using two general classifications of learning theory which are: 1) Stimulus-Response Associationism and 2) Gestalt-Field.

Stimulus-Response Associationism theories emphasize the concept of man as a human mechanism which reacts mechanistically to any stimulus situation. No purpose on the part of the individual is necessary. The Gestalt-Field theories hold the opposite view in that these theories hold that man is an active, purposive creature, and they consider the whole as being greater than the sum of its parts. Thus, man is changed by his environment and his environment is changed by him.

Connectionism as a theory of learning was developed by E. L. Thorndike. It is also known as the S-R bond theory. This theory assumes that specific responses became linked with specific stimuli. Thorndike experimented with trial and error learning. Thorndike thought any learner would derive satisfaction when the right connection was found (Law and Effect). Thorndike also formulated a Law of Exercise which attributed the strengthening of the connection between the stimulus and response to sheer repetition. Although Thorndike later disavowed this law, we find many teachers still practicing it. Thorndike's Law of Readiness helps explain why people learn. The law is based on the idea that neurons and a synapse constitute a conduction unit through which bonds or connections are formed. If a conduction unit is ready and responds to a stimulus, a satisfying learning experience results and tends to fix a response. The opposite is likewise true. In all of Thorndike's theories is the premise that whenever an animal or person is ready to respond to a stimulus situation, the response is pleasurable and is learned.

Some of the implications of Thorndike's Laws of Learning for teaching adults are as follows:

1. The adult must be provided with learning situations to which his adult background of experiences can be readily related.

2. To the adult, the S-R bonds to be strengthened by repetition must be relevant to his life purposes.

3. Adults have already made many S-R bonds which they use even if they deter rather than further learning. ABE teachers should try to detect what these bonds are and create situations in which such persons will not only recognize their errors but will also attempt to correct them by learning new relationships.

4. The adult, more than the child will demand that learning materials be meaningful and that sometimes long processes of trial and error result in a solution satisfying to him.

Conditioning processes by which a new or mutual stimulus is associated with a stimulus producing a given response will produce this same response when the original stimulus is withdrawn, and leads to other fields of learning theory. We have the classical conditioning theory by the Russian physiologist, Pavlov, by which any response made to a conditioned stimulus is a conditioned response. Most people exhibit in their behavior

patterns many conditioned responses. These may be avoidance responses or fear of all dogs after having been frightened on one occasion. Similar prejudices, as well as likes and dislikes, are similarly learned without the learner's being conscious of their acquisition. Teachers, as well as their adult students, have fears, prejudices and convictions that have been building through the years. Teachers of adults will need to create a learning atmosphere conducive to rational behavior and a feeling of security. Such an atmosphere may be even more important than teaching procedures, for without the former, the latter will have little effect.

Clark L. Hull (in Principles of Behavior, 1943) proposed that need is the basis for arousal in the organism. Such arousal is known as a stimulus drive and brings about actions leading to a reduction of need. If the response actually reduces the need, it is reinforced and the same stimulus will tend to evoke the same response thereafter. A. H. Maslow (in "A Theory of Human Motivations") proposed that it is only when drives or needs at the lower level are satisfied that one is likely to aspire to the satisfaction of his needs of a higher order. For example, as long as a child or adult is hungry continually, he will find little motivation in learning for self-enhancement. Nor will an adult frustrated by lack of success or rejection by his peers likely be motivated by any need for self-realization.

Operant conditioning theories of learning imply a method of conditioning as a process of learning in which the learner reacnes

the response before he receives the stimulus. In simple language, he must complete an action before he can receive a reward. The reward tends to make the response more likely to recur. Accordingly, learning takes place when "there is a feedback from reinforcing stimulus to the previous response" (Biggee and Hunt, Psychological Foundations of Education). Largely from B. F. Skinner and his experiments at Harvard University comes our greatest evidence of learning through operant conditioning. Skinner and his work with the "shaping process" with pigeons resulted in his strong recommendations for programmed instruction and the utilization of teaching machines. In all operant conditioning, the experimental subject does something and makes some sort of response before receiving a reward. Resourceful teachers will find many opportunities to apply the principle of immediate reinforcement in their teaching.

A final form of conditioning as a learning theory is contiguous conditioning. Contiguous conditioning involves no reinforcement. E. E. Guthrie, the chief proponent of contiguous conditioning defines it as a stimulus pattern that is acting at the same time as a response and will, if it recurs, tend to produce that response. Guthrie's experiments further indicate that if the same stimuli become associated with other responses, difficulty arises for the learner when he attempts to make the original response.

Then what are the implications of the conditioning theories of learning for teaching adults or ABE students? First, many of

the people enrolled in basic education programs have already been conditioned to respond negatively to teachers, to studying, to books, etc. Teachers who are aware of these conditioned attitudes can, by their attitudes and by gearing their teaching to the needs and goals of the student, elicit favorable instead of negative responses. The teacher should try to determine whether the presence of tension is likely to increase the frustration level. In developing the curriculum, the teacher will need to become "expert" in the selecting of the subject materials or stimulus situations in order to evoke responses previously determined to be "proper" behavior for the persons being taught. Also involved is the fact that complex learning should be arranged in simple, easy-to-group steps that lead to the solution of a problem or to the meaning of a generalization. Likewise, the correct response to each step in the learning process should be rewarded by approbation and encouragement The time of exposure to each step must be adapted to the ability of the adult to respond. Insufficient time to respond will build up tension. If the stimulus and response are contiguous, the teacher should get the learner to perform in some selected manner, and while he is so performing, present the stimulus that is to be associated with the performance.

The Gestalt-Insight theory of learning was first developed in Germany and, put simply, a Gestalt is an organized whole in contrast to a collection of parts. What this means is that persons responding to a learning situation perceive it as a whole

using only those elements that have meaning for them. Perceptions and provisional tries in seeing relationships and gaining insight are the sole purpose of the Gestalt theories. Learning does take place by sensing relationship as general principles. Insight is a basic feeling for relationships.

Field theory psychologists, of whom Kurt Levine was a leader, emphasize the attitudes, expectations, feelings and needs of the learner as important forces present at any given time in the learner's environment. The theory deals mostly with learning in group situations and with motivation as it relates to learning. Simulation techniques with different social climates, such as autocratic, democratic, and laissez faire, have been used to effect learning by adults. Teachers of adults are leaders instrumental in creating the social climate in which students are supposed to learn. To be effective in doing this, the teacher must look at the total learning situation through the eyes of each learner and sense past and present frustrations, aspirational levels, etc. Teachers must recognize that various forces shift from time to time. For example, a person is apathetic towards learning at a particular time may be quite opposite at a later date.

As a result of the Gestalt-Field learning theories, the following implications are made for teaching adults. To the adult, learning must be meaningful. The adult can deal in understanding with greater ease because his perception becomes broader and more generalized as he ages. Provisions must be made for the adult to progress or move toward goals which are "real" for him

within his life. Learning situations should be presented in a manner that permits the appropriate use of past experiences. The learning situation should consist of inherently related parts that can be perceptualized as a whole. Not all changes in behavior are the result of insight. One may recite a poem with no understanding of its meaning. Also, insight does not always result in observable behavior. One may gain insight into injustices without doing anything about them or even writing or talking about them. The important thing in learning is the thought processes, rather than the actions, of the learner. How the learner thinks his way through a situation is more important than memorizing a solution. The learners should be involved in defining problems and in planning other learning situations. Therefore, materials and their presentation should enable the learner to relate his goals to the means of attaining them.

In conclusion, it can be said that the teachers of the ABE student who have knowledge of learning theories and their implications for Adult Basic Education will be successful only if they ascertain what the theories mean and translate them into practices which are necessary for teachers of ABE. On the basis of these implications, the successful ABE teacher will be one who quickly gets to know his students and establishes a rapport with them. He ascertains why each person chose to enroll in the program and what needs the student is trying to satisfy, and thereby adapts the program to the needs of the students. The successful teacher will be well aware of individual differences in adults and will

be quick to sense when his students are discouraged and fearful. At the same time, the teacher expects his students to be reaching beyond the level they can attain easily without their becoming frustrated. The successful teacher is optimistic. He is cheery, friendly, and has a sense of humor. To him, and therefore to his students, learning is a pleasurable experience, not drudgery. This good teacher organizes work into short units to allow for the short attention spans of most adults. He plans the work so that the students may enjoy success experiences as they progress. He makes sure that every student meets some success rather than failure. The successful teacher believes in the dignity of the individual. He recognizes that to be culturally different does not necessarily mean to be culturally deprived. He studies and learns to understand the cultures and sub-cultures that the adult student may be part of. The successful teacher does not equate the lack of basic skills with stupidity. He accepts his students for what they are and utilizes their experiences in living in building his curriculum. The successful ABE teacher does not impose his middle-class values and way of life on his students. He recognizes that their values and mores may be just as right for them as his are for him.

It is hoped that greater insights into the learning theories and the way an ABE student learns will be gained by means of the implications presented herein.

ILLINOIS MIGRANT COUNCIL TRAINING CONFERENCE

QUESTIONNAIRE

As a participant in the Illinois Migrant Council Training Conference held 7 - 8 December 1968, your response to the following questions is asked. All correspondence should be directed to Educational Systems Corporation.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided for your convenience.

Your name is not required.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. In what way was the conference beneficial to you? Circle one.

   a. Provided information

   b. Provided methods and techniques

   c. Provided exchange of ideas

2. In the area of Mexican-American culture, how knowledgeable were you before the conference? Circle one.

   a. Not at all

   b. Fairly knowledgeable

   c. Extremely knowledgeable

3. After the conference, the problems of the migrant dilemma were... Circle one.

   a. Not all evident

   b. Fairly evident

   c. More pronounced

4. Student grouping provides a more relaxed atmosphere for teaching. Circle one.

   a. Yes

   b. No

5. New concepts in education are needed in teaching the IMC program enrollees. Circle one.

   a. Yes

   b. No

6. The teaching of English as a second language should be coordinated with the migrants' viability in the community and employment potential. Circle one.

   a. Very much

   b. Somewhat

   c. Not at all

7. In developing curriculum, professionals and para-professionals should play a definite educational role. Circle one.

   a. Yes

   b. No

8. Audio-visual equipment is essential in teaching adults. The addition of such teaching aids would help my instruction. Circle one.

   a. Very much

   b. Somewhat

   c. Not at all

9. Community participation in the various centers enhances the migrants' viability in the community in that the community becomes more aware of the migrants' problems. If this statement is true, teacher-aides from the community would aid the centers. Circle one.

   a. Very much

   b. Somewhat

   c. Not at all

QUESTIONNAIRE (cont.)

10. Teacher-aides who speak Spanish can be instrumental in developing student-teacher relationships. Therefore, these individuals should... Circle two (2).

    a. Assist teachers in leading discussion groups

    b. Be trained as counselors

    c. Act as interpretors for teachers

11. Audio-visual equipment at the various centers should be utilized in classroom instruction. Circle one.

    a. Yes

    b. No

12. Student cooperation in developing a curriculum aids the teacher in... Circle one.

    a. Developing a more meaningful curriculum

    b. Satisfying the students' needs

    c. Alleviating conflicts in the class

13. Merely teaching English as a second language can do more harm than good if it does not involve the migrant as he relates to general community living, job training and placement, and consumer education.

    In this manner, English as a second language can be... Circle one.

    a. Very profitable

    b. Fairly profitable

    c. Not profitable

QUESTIONNAIRE (cont.)

14. Centers, even though somewhat independent of IMC would appreciate information as to curriculum content and program philosophy. Circle one.

    a. Yes

    b. No

15. Area Coordinators are a vital link between Illinois Migrant Council, the community at large, and the migrant. It would be helpful to the program to entertain their ideas during planning sessions. Circle one.

    a. Yes

    b. No

16. Area Representatives and Student Council Presidents could afford the program added success if their roles were made more meaningful in the program. Circle one.

    a. Yes

    b. No

17. Tests to evaluate achievement of the program participants should be conducted... Circle one.

    a. In the middle of the program

    b. At intervals during the program

    c. At the end of the program

18. It has been said that standardized tests are not valid for measuring the academic achievement of the program's population. If this statement is correct, teachers should assess student achievement through... Circle one.

    a. Teacher-made examinations

    b. Student-made examinations

    c. Student-teacher made examinations

    d. Other--explain

QUESTIONNAIRE (cont.)

19. It has been shown that counseling of students aids the student not only in academic achievement, but also in living better in the community. In this regard, the counseling should be conducted by... Circle one.

    a. Para-professionals

    b. Teachers

    c. Both

    d. Other--explain

20. This space is provided to give you the opportunity to express ideas which you feel could possibly be implemented into the IMC program.

TABLE OF RESPONSES

Percentage of those Responding

Question	A	B	C	D
1	32%	16%	52%	--
2	8%	60%	32%	--
3	8%	40%	48%	--
4	84%	8%	--	--
5	88%	8%	--	--
6	100%	none	none	--
7	96%	4%	--	--
8	52%	36%	4%	--
9	68%	28%	none	--
10	76%	32%	44%	--
11	100%	none	--	--
12	56%	36%	4%	--
13	72%	24%	4%	--
14	84%	4%	--	--
15	96%	4%	--	--
16	88%	8%	--	--
17	4%	72%	20%	--
18	48%	4%	40%	8%
19	12%	16%	64%	none
20	Twenty-eight% of the participants responded verbally.			

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JUL 9 1969
on Adult Education